



**To:** Members of the House Military and Veterans Affairs Standing Committee Meeting

**From:** Joshua Lunger, Public Policy Coordinator

**Subject:** Support House Bill 5036

**Date:** February 12, 2014

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On behalf of the Grand Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce and our 2,700 members, I urge you to support Michigan veterans by voting yes on House Bill 5036.

I am United States Army veteran, who served fifteen months in Iraq. I immediately pursued a degree after completion of my 3 ½ years of service, and while the military provides classes that offer some advice on what credits you may be eligible for, many veterans do not know how to proceed in receiving deserved credit for training and course work conducted while in the military once they return home.

I personally encountered the confusing process and failed to ever receive credit for my training even though other veterans attending the same university with the same or similar training did receive credit.

I submitted the required documentation to the University I attended and was never notified of any status or even receipt. Closer to graduation, I contacted the University's office that works with veterans and was informed that I should have received credit but they failed to inform me why it was not granted. From there I was given a new person to contact but I was never able to successfully speak with them.

This legislation would not have directly affected me but its intent will create a stronger process and improve the interaction between our veteran population and our Community Colleges. Reducing confusion and providing our veterans a clear path to their well-deserved credits is essential as many new veterans are continuing to come home to Michigan. Whether through this bill or alternative methods, I urge you support this effort.

Sincerely,

Joshua Lunger